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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ACOUSTIC ENERGY OF UNDERWATER EXPLOSIONS OF GASEOUS HYDROGEN AND OXYGEN IN A GAS-WATER RESONATOR

James F. Miles, et al

Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California

1962

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THESIS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Department of Electronics

Approved:

ABSTRACT

In recent years at the U. S. Haval Postgraduate School, a great deal of interest has been exhibited in the use of hydrogen-expect was been sions in semi-enclosed chambers as an underwater acoustic signal rowers. The basic intent of this thesis was an investigation of the summer of acoustic energy available from such a controlled explosion and its dependence on various mixtures of gas, including excess assumes of hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen.

The low energy yields obtained were both unexpected and disappointing and the efficiency of conversion from chemical to account energy was astonishingly low; so low that the value of the process as a source of acoustic signals is considered to be of doubtful significance.

Frequency spectra and time domain photographs of each explosion and a short section on variation of energy with depth of explosion are included.

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1. Introduction.

This thesis was undertaken as a direct follow-up of some of the recommendations made in theses completed at the Naval Postgraduate School in
1960 and 1961. /1/, /2/

Since the work done in these thoses indicated that explosive mixtures of oxygen and hydrogen could be obtained by controlled electrolysis in sea water and that a judicious choice of chamber size and shape, explosive mixture, quantity and type of excess gas and depth could result in accustic signals of discrete bandwidth, it was felt by the authors that further investigation of this method of generating accustic signals could yield important results.

The authors decided that the field of acoustic energy measurement was most important since it would lead to a knowledge of the actual acoustic energy available and to a determination of the chamical to acoustic energy conversion efficiency. In addition, this area of study would provide a method of determining the most efficient mixture, the best chaps of transducer and any changes in mixture which might be required, as a function of depth, to maintain efficiency.

Due to problems encountered in the calibration of hydrophones, in devising a method of positioning the hydrophone with respect to the transmiducer without inducing secondary effects in the system and, in no small degree, to poor weather conditions over a large part of the period available for experimentation, it was not possible to investigate all of these parameters. Since a simple transducer was available from pre-loss experiments, /2/, it was used in this experiment with the formation of a siffying it as results and developments dictated. Due to the problems previousely mentioned, no changes were made and the results presented in this distant

are for this transducer only,

In conducting the experiments, a hydrophone was connected to a tape recorder which received and stored the signal for inter analysis in the laboratory. Analysis was carried out using a spectrum analyzer and oscilloscope for frequency and time domain studies. The acoustic energy was calculated by a time sampling technique with voltage ordinates obtained from the expanded trace of the memoscope and converted to pressure ordinates through a knowledge of the characteristics of the hydrophone and tape recorder. The equipment, the techniques used, and the calibration procedures followed are more fully discussed in the Appendices.

It would not be possible here to include the names of all who have been of assistance to us in obtaining equipment and providing guidance and advice. We do, however, wish to extend our thanks to Professor C. F. Klamm for assistance with the energy calculation method, to Professors L. E. Kinsler, O. B. Wilson and D. A. Stentz for helpful suggestions, to Professor C. E. Mennecken for arranging the loan of the spectrum analyzer, and to the First Lieutenant, LCDR W. E. Walkup, who provided the boat and crew without which it would not have been possible to conduct the experiments. Special thanks go to the man of the boat crew and technicians of the electronics staff who worked for us under sometimes adverse condictons at sea.

2. Equipment and Measurements.

(a) Transducer, Gas Heasurevent and Ignition of Explanten

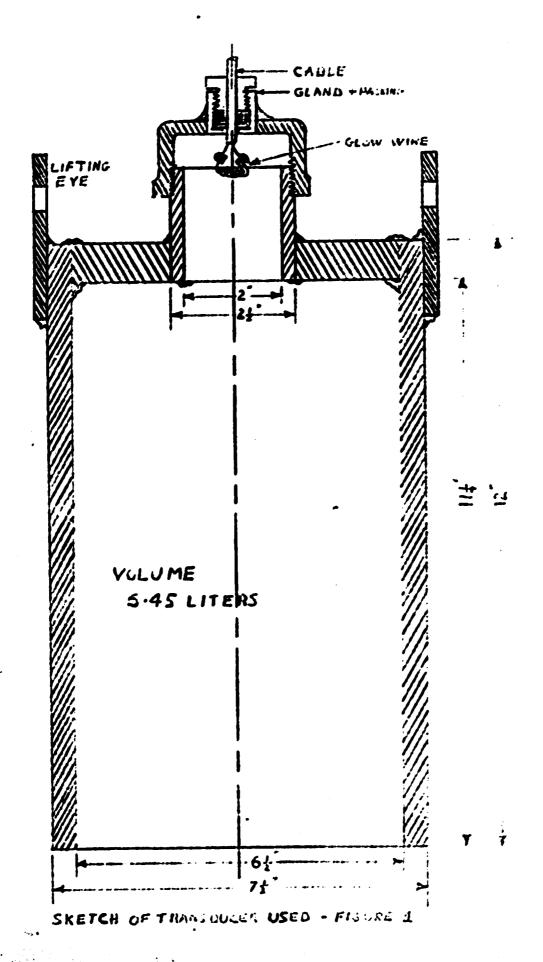
As mentioned, the explosive chamber (transducer) was available from previous experiments. /2/ The transducer is shown in Fig. 1.

The gas volume measurement procedure used was identical with that employed by previous experimenters /2/ and the calibration curves for the regulator valves used are given in Appendix I.

Ignition of the explosion was accomplished by placing two six volt d.c. batteries in series across a resistance coil in the explosive chamber. Firing current varied from 10 to 12 amperes. Ignition time varied from 8 to 20 sec and seemed to be an increasing function of the amount of excess gas.

(b) Hydrophone

was available from 40 cps to 600 cps when used with 35 ft of 2 conductor shielded cable. Since an additional 200 ft of cable had to be added to this short cable to reach the dapths at which the tests were conducted, reciprocity calibrations were attempted, in a tank, at several frequencies between 50 and 600 cps. As might be expected, difficulties were encountered with standing waves and accurate results were not obtained. However, with the results that were obtained and by comparison through the substitution method with an H1158 hydrophone, for which a calibration curve was available, a figure of -35 db to 1 volt per microbar not obtained for the frequency range of interest. This compared with -61.7 for the local per microbar given on the calibration curve and seems markedly reasonable in view of the extra length of cable involved. This figure of -85 db to 1 volt per microbar was used as the hydrophone maspense in



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ali calculations.

(c) Evdrophone Positioning

In measuring the acoustic energy available from an explosion it is necessary to fix the hydrophone at a known distance from the source of the explosion. It is also important to know whother there is any directionality in the propagation of the sound due to the transducer configuration or other factors. If measurements could be made at several fixed angles relative to the transducer while maintaining a fixed distance from it, any directionality present in the signal should be apparent. An attempt was made to meet these requirements by fixing the hydrophone to the end of a boom, the other end of which was pivoted at the suspension point of the transducer.

Unfortunately, it was found that with a free hanging transducer, as was used in these experiments, the presence of the boom had an effect on the explosion and that this effect varied with the position of the boom. For instance, high frequencies (3-4 Kcs.) were observed in the output when the boom was vertical or close to vertical which were not present when the hydrophone was placed in the same position by tying it to the suspension line and removing the boom. This indicated that the boom was excited to longitudinal vibration by the force of the explosion and that the high frequencies came from the boom and not the transducer. The soom was therefore discarded and another approach to the problem of directions, by were made.

The hydrophone was attached to a length of line which was sacured to the suspension cable of the transducer; additions remains was placed on the hydrophone cable to insure that the hydrophone to remediator spacing was approximately the length of the line. In this way the hydrophone was post-tioned at several different though acknown angles with respect to the trans-ducer. When the output wave forms of explosions with the hydrophone directly

above the transducer were compared with the output wave forms of similar explosions with the hydrophone approximately the same distance to one side of the transducer, they were found to be quite similar and, with few exceptions, contained no frequencies above 600 cps. Since it is known that little directivity can be expected from any device whose physical dimensions are less than one quarter wave length, (approx. 100 inches at 600 cps in see water) it was apparent that the 7-1/2 inches diameter by 18 inches long transducer could not direct the sound. On this premise, the transducer was trusted as a point source, radiating sound uniformly in all directions, and all measurements were made with the hydrophone secured to the transducer suspension line at a point 20 ft above the center of the transducer.

(d) Recording System

Since an open boat without an electric power plant was employed as a platform from which to conduct the actual explosions in deep water, it was not possible to take analysis equipment along. Instead, a small 12 valo d.c. to 117 volt 60 cps rotary converter was used to supply an Ampax 600 Tape Pecorder, on which all explosions were recorded.

The tape recorder had a raintively small dynamic range (about 35 db) and care had to be taken not to overload the input emplifier. Whenever overload did occur, the shot was repeated at a lower input level. Type ty-corder gain characteristics were investigated as a function of input level and are given in Fig. 2. In all calculations gains of 12, 18, and 24 db we were used for microphone input levels of 3.0, 3.5 and 4.0 respectively.

(e) Analysis

Analysis of the recorded explosion waveforms was carried out in both the time and frequency domains. The output of the tape recorder, properly terminated in a 600 clm load, was fed to a Rughes "Bone-scope"

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in order to obtain voltage vs time waveforms which could be converted to pressure vs time through a knowledge of the tape recorder and hydrophene response characteristics.

Using sampling theory, it was possible to calculate the acoustic energy generated by each explosion from the pressure vs time waveforms.

Appendix II gives the theory and an illustration of the technique used in these calculations.

The output of the tape recorder was also fed to a Kay Electric "Vibralyzer" from which an amplitude vs frequency spectrum was obtained, usually from 5 to 250 cps but occasionally 5 to 500 cps when the spectrum spread beyond 250 cps. It was not possible to calibrate the Vibralyzer so as to give absolute intensity levels, due to the complicated interaction of the record level, reproduce level and mark level controls but relative amplitudes of prominent components could be determined. The amplitude scales on the spectra in Appendix IV are therefore plotted in db below the amplitude of the peak component.

noticeably in number 22, that a high frequency component is present during portions of the output pulse. The frequency of this component was determined to be about 2 Kcs which is the frequency of "ringing" of the transducer itself when partially filled with gas, suspended just below the surface and hit with a harmer. Since this component is insignificant in nearly all cases, it was ignored in computing the energy content of the output waveforms.

3. Resules.

At the beginning of the investigation, it was known /2/ that the amount of gas in the chamber over and above the amount that would recombine in the explosion was one of the factors controlling the width of the appearum that would be obtained. It was also implied, if not stated, that the acoustic energy available from the explosions in the transducer was quite large. /1/ This assumption was later proven to be invalid; but the investigation began with it as a basis with the intent of measuring this energy, investigating any directionality of the transducer as a necessary adjunct to measuring the energy and computing the chemical to acoustical energy components efficiency.

As the investigation progressed, results were obtained which indicated that not only the amount of excess gas but, to some extent, the return of the excess gas was a parameter affecting the acoustic energy contain of the explosion. The authors decided at this point to concentrate that without in this area and to attempt to determine as nearly as possible the example at one depth which would produce the maximum acoustic energy.

A transducer depth of 200 ft and a water depth always in exects of 400 ft were selected to minimize surface and bottom reflections. Numerical explosions were set off with varying amounts of pure hydrogen, exygen and the trogen as the excess gas and additional shots were made with various piletures of these gases as excess. During this series of shots, one liter of combustible mixture (0.33 liter 0, and 0.67 liter H₂) was majorning

The end results of the investigation can book be appreciated those a study of Figures 3, 4, and 5, which show curves of acoustic and ray as a function of quantity of excess gas for pure hydrogen excess, pure aftergraph excess, and various mixtures of excess respectively. It is investigatly

obvious that the addition of excess gas affects the acoustic output and that peak acoustic output occurs for retion of excess gas to explosive mixture between 1.5:1 and 2:1. This peaking effect correlates to some extent with detonation velocities for mixtures of these same gases given on page 80, Underwater Explosions by R. H. Cole /3/.

The most surprising result of the investigation, was neither that a peak did occur nor that it occurred where it did, but that the accustic output at this peak was so small. When it is considered that over 7000 joules of free energy is available in the recombination of the gases involved, (see Appendix IV) the conversion of less than one joule to accustic energy given a conversion efficiency in the neighborhood of 1/100 of one percent. When it is further considered that the spectra obtained in the region of maximum efficiency are relatively broad compared to the narrowr spectra obtained with less efficient explosions, it is apparent that the requirements of high accustic output and narrow spectrum are asstually incompatible, at least for the particular transducer used in these tests. In any case the very low accustic efficiency indicates the process is of doubtful value as a source of high intensity acoustic signals.

Although the study of the spectra involved in these explosions has already been well covered /2/, the time domain pictures, frequency appetra and a tabulation of acoustic energy content are included in Appendix III for those interested in studying them. Time domain pictures have ordinates converted to pressure in newtons/meter² and abscissa given in milli-seconds, while the frequency spectra ordinates give relative power in decibals below the power in the strongest frequency component.

A brief study of scoustic energy as a function of depth was extempted. For a single mixture, shots were conducted at 200, 175, 150, 125, and 103

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feet. The mixture chosen had two liters excess 'spinger and the results are plotted in Fig. 6 which indicates that there is no significant variation over the range of depths investigated.

Interesting, though not important, results were obtained in the explosions which contained oxygen as the excess gas (Appendix IV), numbers 37 to 41). The pulse was approximately the same pressure level as the excess hydrogen and nitrogen shots, but was of very short duration, in some cases only one or two cycles of oscillation.

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4. Conclusions.

- (a) Acoustic energy content is a function of excess gas in the ex-
- (b) As a function of the amount of excess gas, the range over which maximum acoustic energy is obtained does not correspond with the range over which the narrow bandwidth desired is obtained. Therefore, for the transducer used, these two desirable characteristics are incompacible.
- (c) Chemical to acoustic energy conversion efficiencies are extremely low in the transducer used in these experiments. Peak efficiency obtained was of the order of 1/100 of one percent.
- (d) The efficiency of the process, using bottled gas or in conjunction with a hydrolysis process, is so low that its value as a source of high intensity acoustic signals is extremely doubtful.

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5. Recommendations.

- (a) No further work should be done in this field at the U. S. Mayof.

 Postgraduate School unless theoretical studies indicate a transducer design, gas mixture or detonation method which would improve the conversion efficiency by at least 3 orders of magnitude.
- (b) In the event that further work is sutherized, a more suitable boat with an internal power supply and equipped with suitable power winches should be provided as a platform from which to conduct the tasts.

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APPEIMIX I

GAS VOLUME HEASUREMENTS

The technique of metering the gas into the explosive chamber was developed by previous experimenters. /2/ The calibration curves for the regulator valves used are shown in Fig. 7 where the ordinate is milli-liters of gas and the abscissa is gas pressure in the high pressure gauge of the valve.

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APPENDIX IT

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND ENERGY COMPUTATION

As mentioned in the text and other appendices, the wave forms of the explosive signals were displayed on the Hughes Memo-scope. Ordinates were then recorded every Δt seconds where Δt is defined as follows:

If any complex wave form be sampled at a rate such that the number of samples is 2TM+1, where T is the length of the signal if the signal is non-periodic and is the period if the signal has periodicity and where M is defined as twice the highest significant frequency component, then sampling theory states that the wave form may be reproduced from these ordinates to an excellent degree of accuracy. If we assume that 2TM is much greater than one then the number of samples becomes 2TM and the sampling interval is T, the length of the pulse, divided by 2TM, the number of sample ordinates; this sampling fairerval is that ΔT which was to be defined.

From sampling theory we also know that the energy in the pulse is given by

Energy $= \sum_{k} V_{k}^{2}$. At where $\sum_{k} V_{k}^{2}$ is the summation of the squares of the several sampled ordinates, V_{k} . Here the waveform is assumed to be one of voltage and also to be taken across a one ohm load. From the gain characteristics of the tape recorder, the response characteristics of the receiving hydrophone and spherical divergence for the known spacing because hydrophone and transducer, the voltage ordinates may be converted to accustic pressure ordinates. Acoustic energy in the explosive pressure pulse may then be computed from the relation —

where $\sum_{R} P_{R}^{2}$ is the summation of the squares of the presence ordinates, P_{R} . The quantity P_{R}^{2} is the account is impossible of section and the term P_{R}^{2} is the account in impossible of section and the term P_{R}^{2} is the account in impossible of section and the term P_{R}^{2} is the summation of the squares of the standard sphere of one mater radius. Here it is assumed that there is no directivity, an assumption that is reasonable for the frequencies involved and one that was to some degree verified by observation.

Now, compute the conversion constant which converts voltage squared to acoustic pressure squared. Assume one volt out of the tape recorder at a microphone input level setting of four (24 db gain). The input would then be 24 db below one volt; and, assuming the receiving hydrophone to be flat at -85 db re 1 volt per microbar, the sound pressure level at 20 ft is

$$SPL = -24 - (-85) = 61 db.$$

Allowing for spherical divergence to find the source level (31,).

$$SL = 61 + 20 \log r$$
 (r in meters.)

$$SL = 61 + 20 \log 6.10 = 76.7 db$$

From the relation between source level and pressure

St = 20 log 10 P₄ (where P₄ is accustic pressure in Newtons per square mater.)

The pressure equivalent of 1 volt is

$$P_{L} = 684$$
 Newtons/meters²/valt.

squaring this constant yields

$$P_{L}^{2} = 4.68 \times 10^{5}$$
 Newtons²/maters⁴/volts².

Similar calculations for microphone input levels of three (12 db gain) and three and one-half (18 db gain) gave as values for P^2 and P

$$P_3^2 = 7.41 \times 10^6$$
 Newtons 2/meters $\frac{4}{\text{volts}^2}$.

Now for any given $\sum V_R^2$ and where, have input level the energy to the pulse is

and the instantaneous peak power is

A tabulation for all shots is given in Appendix III.

APPENDIX 111

A TABULATION OF ALL SHOTS, TIME DOMAIN PHOTOGRAPHS AND FREQUENCY SPECTRA

This appendix is a tabulation of all shots. Table I includes shot number, date shot made, nature and quantity of excess gas, instantaneous peak acoustic power and total acoustic energy. Time domain photographs and frequency spectra for each shot in Table I are also shown.

In the time domain photographs the ordinate is given in newrons/
meter² per division and the abscissa in milli-seconds per division.

In the frequency spectra the ordinate is in decibels below the peak
component and the abscissa in cycles per second.

TABLE T

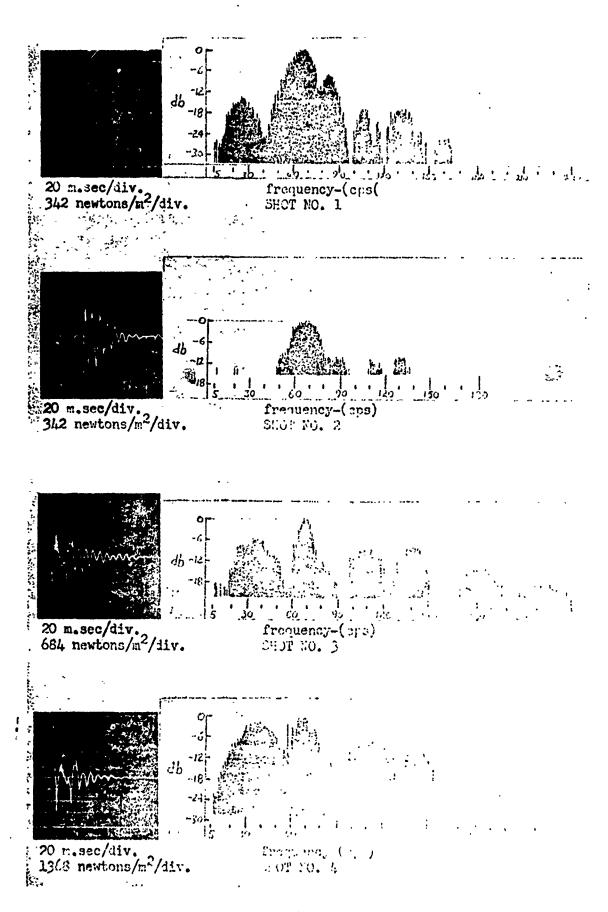
Shot	Date	Exce	ess Gas	Instantancous	Tain!		
	of Shot	H ₂	N_2	Peak Acoustic Power	Acoustic Energy		
····		Liters	Liters	Watts	Joules		
1	21 Feb.	3.0	•	5.5	.051		
2	7 Mar.	3.0	•	11	-093		
3	7 Mer.	2.5	•	36.7	.248		
4	13 Mar.	2.25	•	137	.458		
5	23 Feb.	2.0	•	88	.580		
6	7 Mar	2.0	•	107	.562		
7	13 Mar.	1.75	-	146	.690		
8	7 Mer.	1.5	•	137	.612		
9	13 Mar.	1.5	-	146	.647		
10	13 Mar.	1.25	•	208.5	.544		
11	28 Feb	1.0	•	55,3	. 196		
12	21 Feb.	•	3.0	11.7	.066		
13	7 Har.	•	3.0	12.4	.138		
14	7 Mar.	-	2.5	8.6	.136		
15	27 Mar.	•	2.0	23.0	.125		
ì6	13 Mar.	•	2.0	29.9	.252		
17	13 Mar.	-	1.75	91.6	.471		
18	7 Mar.	•	1,5	95	.511		
19	. 13 Har.	•	1.5	87.6	. 509		
20	13 Mar.	•	1.25	156	.518		
21	28 Feb.	-	1.0	55.3	.212		

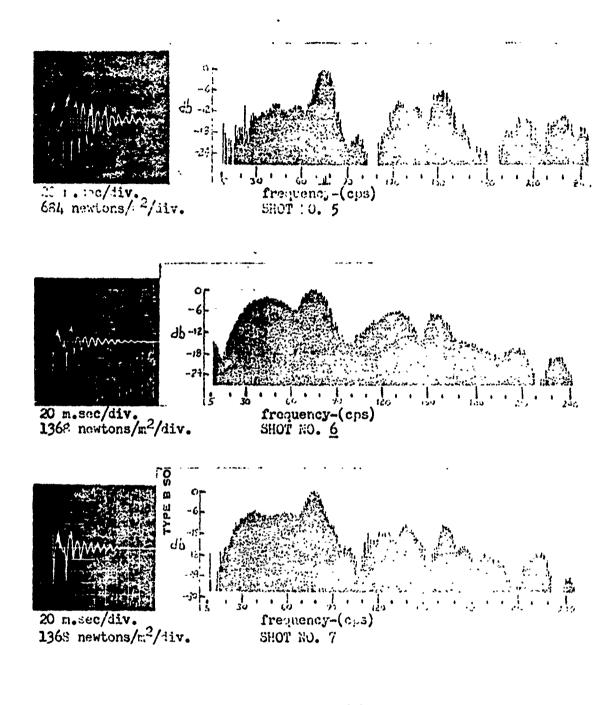
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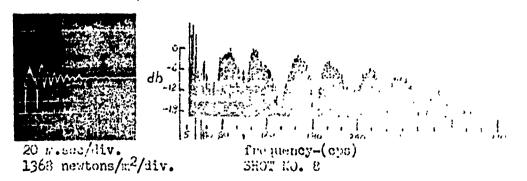
TABLE I (cont.)

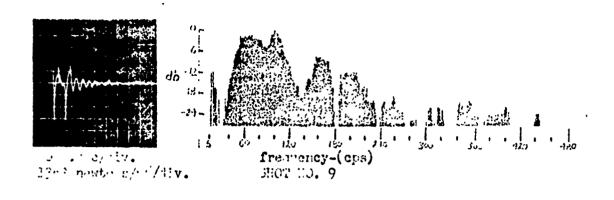
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	of Chan	R ₂	02	N ₂	Peak Acoustic			
	Shot	Liters	Liters	Liters	Power Watts	Joules Joules		
22	7 Har.	0.5	•	0.5	40.6	.049		
23	7 Mar.	1.0	•	0.5	102.7	. 359		
24	7 Mar.	0.5	•	1.0	146.8	.469		
25	7 Mer.	1.5	•	0.5	74	.514		
26	28 Feb.	1.0	•	1.0	55. 3	,442		
27	28 Feb.	0.5	•	1.5	39.3	.283		
28	7 Mar.	2.0	•	0.5	21,2	.177		
29	ÿ Mar.	1.5	•	1.0	11.75	.118		
30	7 Mar.	1.0	•	1.5	59.5	.130		
31	7 Mar.	0.5	-	2.0	13,8	.177		
32	7 Her.	2,5	•	.5	8,34	. 1.35		
33	7 Mar.	2.0	•	1.0	9.82	. 133		
34	7 Mar.	1.5	•	1.5	8.02	. 120		
35	28 Feb.	1.0	-	2.0	13.8	.154		
36	28 Feb.	0,5	•	2.5	11.1	.074		
37	28 Feb.	•	0.5	1.5	52,4	. 260		
38	28 Feb.	•	0.5	2,5	9,82	. 198		
39	28 Feb.	•	1.0	1.0	55,3	. 198		
40	28 Feb.	-	1.0	2.0	6.46	.074		
41	27 Feb.	•	3.0	•	9.82	.073		
2	21 Peb.	-	•	•	•	•		

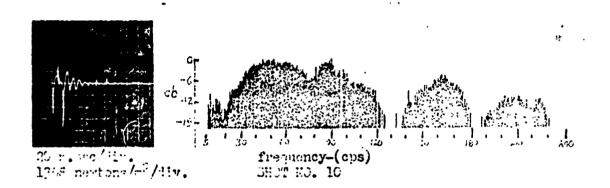
Note: All shots contain 0.67 later H₂ and 0.33 later O₂ in addition to excess shown. Shot number 42 not sampled.

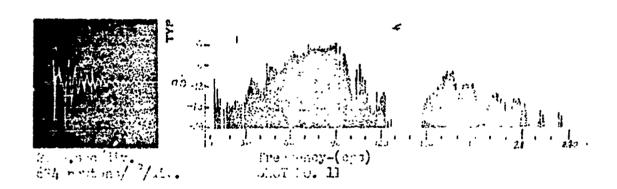


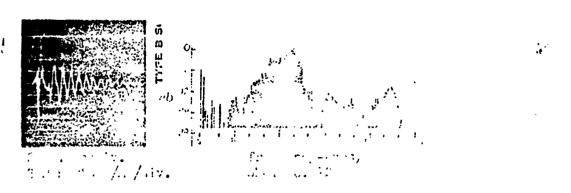


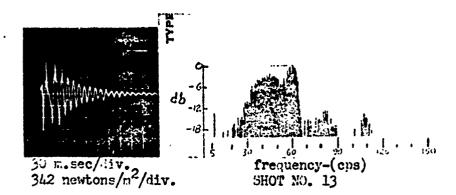


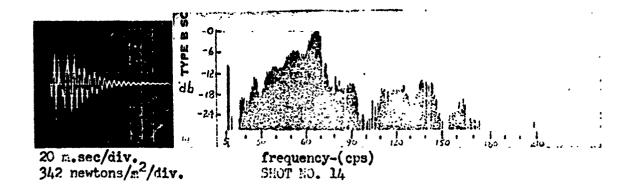


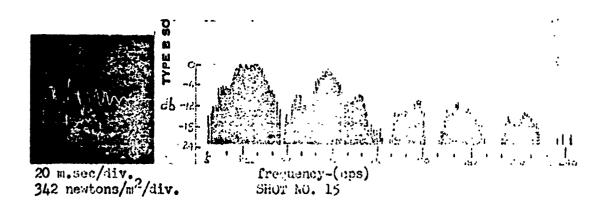


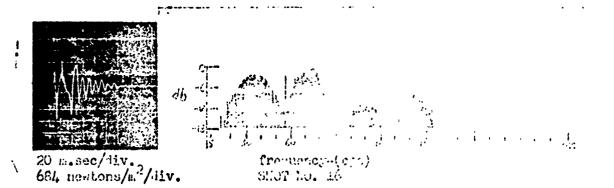


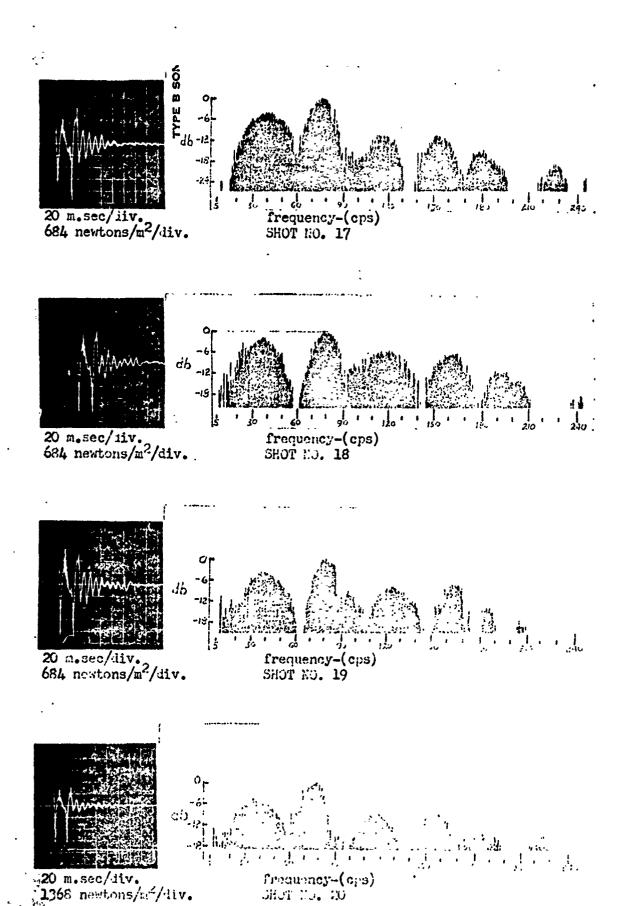


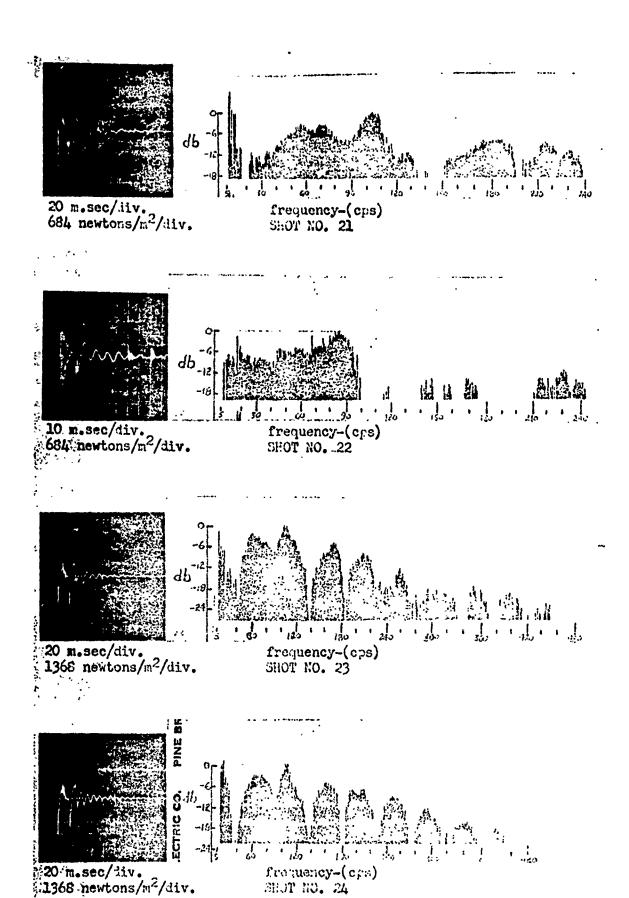


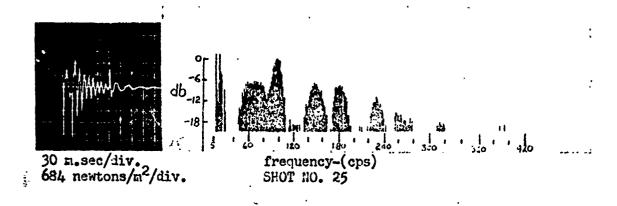


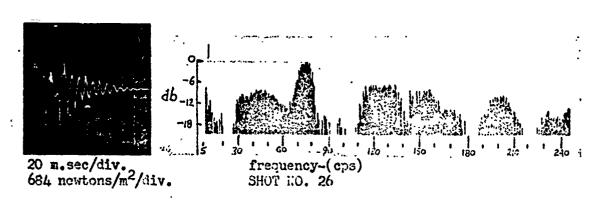


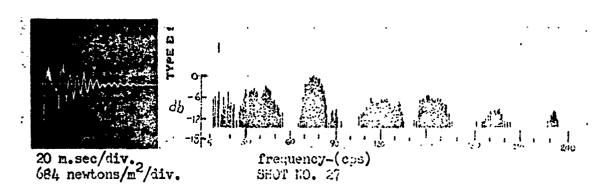


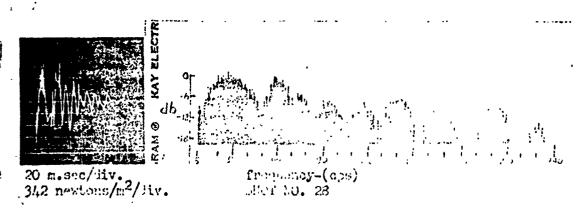


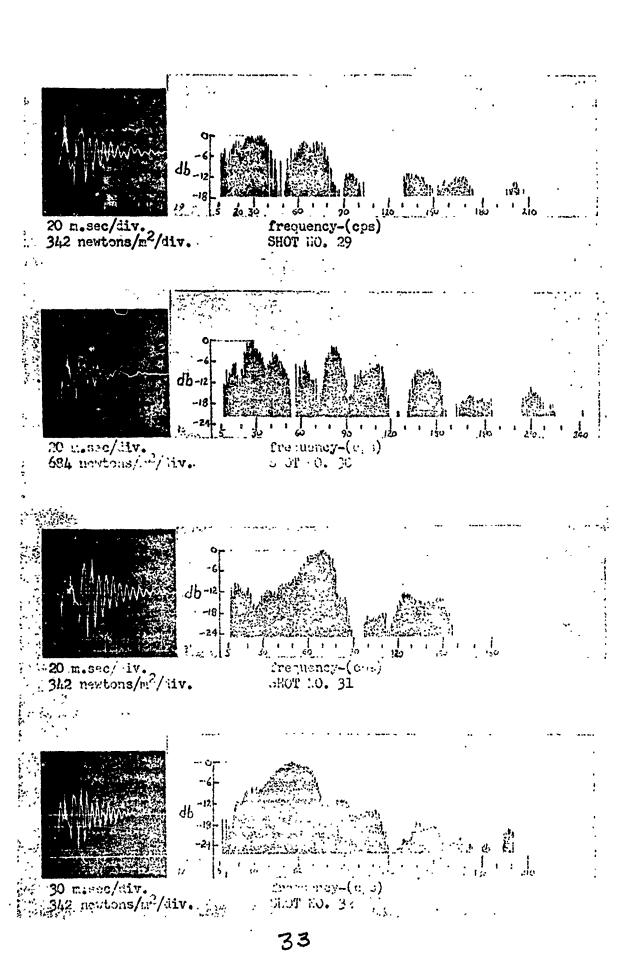


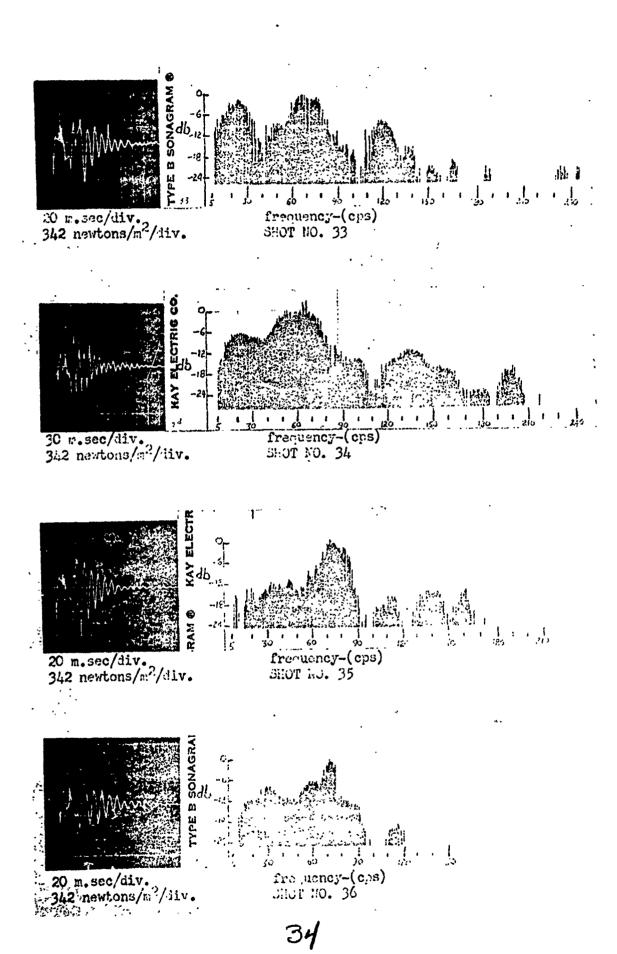


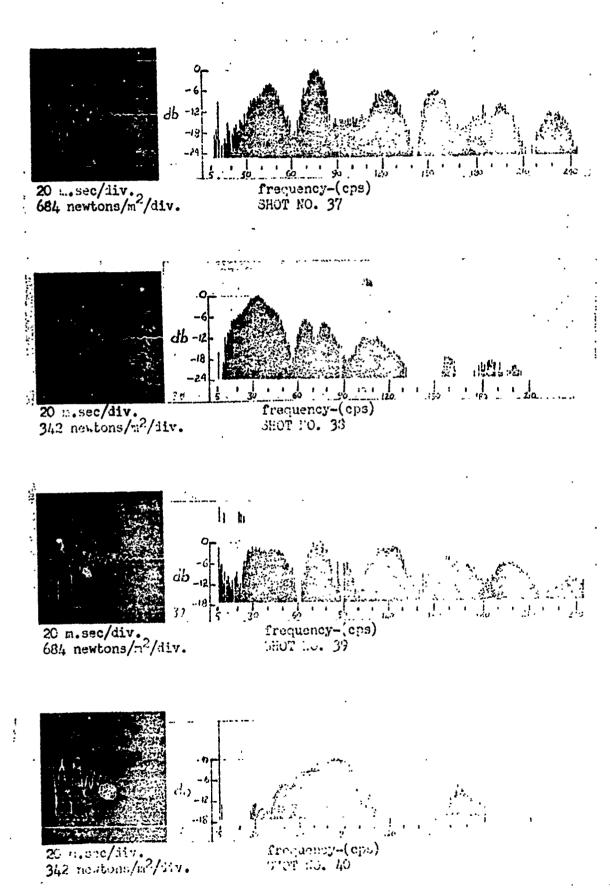


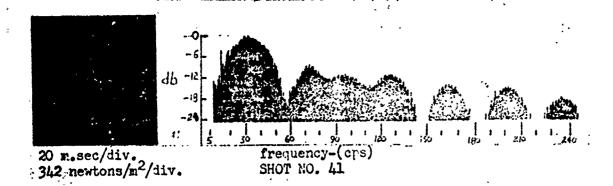


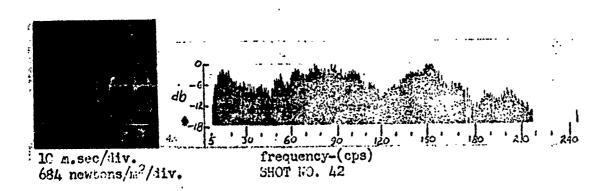












APPENDIX IV

CALCULATION OF CHEMICAL ENERGY

Here it is assumed that the recombination of the hydrogen and oxygen takes place in such a manner that gaseous water is formed initially and that the heat of combustion of this reaction is the available chemical energy. The reaction is:

$$H_2 + \frac{1}{2}O_2 = H_2O + Q$$

where Q is the heat of combustion in cal./mole and is equal to 57,800 cal/mole.

One liter of combustible mixture (0.33 0₂ and 0.67 H₂) was maintained. Assuming that hydrogen and oxygen are ideal gases (22.4 liters/mole), there is 0.0299 mole of hydrogen and 0.0149 moles of oxygen. The reaction will yield 0.0299 moles of water vapor and 1728 calories of heat. Converting calories to joules gives 7260 joules. The value of 7260 joules was used as the chemical energy in computing the chemical to acoustic energy conversion efficiencies.